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NOT BOARD APPROVED

MINUTES
BOARD OF EDUCATION

Special Meeting – March 15, 2011

Executive Session/Phillips Avenue Elementary School Library
Open to Public - Phillips Avenue Elementary School Auditorium

PRESENT: President, Mrs. Ann Cotten-DeGrasse; Vice President, Mr. Gregory Meyer; Mrs. Kathleen V. Berezny; Ms. Angela M. DeVito; Mr. Jeffrey Falisi; and, Mrs. Amelia Lantz.

ABSENT: Mr. Timothy Griffing.

ALSO PRESENT: Ms. Nancy Carney, Dr. Lois Etzel, Mr. Joseph Ogeka, Jr., and Mr. Joseph Singleton.

Mrs. Cotten-DeGrasse called the meeting to order at 5:40 p.m.

Call to Order

A motion was made by Mr. Meyer, seconded by Mrs. Lantz, to recess to executive session to discuss personnel.

Recess to
Executive Session

Yes 6 No 0
Motion Carried.

The Board of Education recessed to executive session at 5:41 p.m.

A motion was made by Ms. DeVito, seconded by Mr. Meyer, to return to open session.

Return to
Open Session

Yes 6 No 0
Motion Carried.

The Board of Education returned to open session at 7:03 p.m.

A brief recess followed.

The meeting resumed at 7:15 p.m. with the pledge of allegiance to the flag.

Pledge of Allegiance

There were about 15 other people in attendance.

ALSO PRESENT: Mrs. Barbara O’Kula.

A motion was made by Mr. Meyer, seconded by Mrs. Lantz, to approve the following resolutions:

Acceptance of Retirement
Incentive Agreements

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WHEREAS, the Riverhead Central School District (hereinafter "District") instituted an early retirement incentive benefit program for the 2010-2011 school year by way of a memorandum of agreement (hereinafter "Agreement") dated March 15, 2011 with the **Riverhead Central Faculty Association**; and

-Riverhead Central Faculty Association

WHEREAS, the Riverhead Central School District (hereinafter "District") instituted an early retirement incentive benefit program for the 2010-2011 school year by way of a memorandum of agreement (hereinafter "Agreement") dated March 15, 2011 with the **Civil Service Employees Association, Local 100, AFSCME, AFL-CIO**, and

-Civil Service Employees Association, Local 100, AFSCME, AFL-CIO

WHEREAS, the Riverhead Central School District (hereinafter "District") instituted an early retirement incentive benefit program for the 2010-2011 school year by way of a memorandum of agreement (hereinafter "Agreement") dated March 15, 2011 with the **Riverhead Teaching Assistants Association**, and

-Riverhead Teaching Assistants Association

WHEREAS, the Riverhead Central School District (hereinafter "District") instituted an early retirement incentive benefit program for the 2010-2011 school year by way of a memorandum of agreement (hereinafter "Agreement") dated March 15, 2011 with the **Civil Service Employees Association, Local 1000, AFSCME, AFL-CIO (Riverhead School Teacher Aides Unit)**, be it

-Civil Service Employees Association, Local 1000, AFSCME, AFL-CIO (Riverhead School Teacher Aides Unit)

RESOLVED, that the Board herewith ratifies all of the above Memorandums of Understanding and authorizes the expenditure of funds necessary to implement said Agreements; and, authorizes the Superintendent of Schools to sign such Agreements.

-All Approved

Yes 6 No 0
Motion Carried.

Ms. Carney gave an overview of the 2011-2012 preliminary budget and began with some things that have made it challenging. Due to increases in personnel costs that occurred as a result of the decline in the stock market, the district's mandated contributions to the ERS and TRS pension costs have increased \$2,126,928 or 39%. In addition to these increases, the district will see a proposed State aid reduction of \$2,674,432 or a reduction of 14.2%. The loss of

Preliminary 2011-2012
Budget Presentation

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state aid and the increases in pension costs will increase the tax levy by \$4,939,546 or 5.7%. This increase is before any other mandated or contractual increases. Current mandated contractual increases for negotiated labor contracts amount to \$2,105,576 or 2.55% on the tax levy. The 2011-2012 preliminary budget of \$110,345,610 represents a 1.96% budget increase in spending. This preliminary figure reflects almost \$4 million in reductions. The budget increase would have been projected at a negative -0.01% without the mandated pension cost increases in ERS and TRS. As a reminder, she outlined how the property tax levy is calculated:

Projected School Spending
(-) minus state aid
(-) minus other revenues
(-) minus prior year's fund balance
= Property Tax Levy

On Long Island, property taxes comprise nearly 70% of school funding. The tax rate is determined around October or so and is dependent upon the state's equalization rate for each of the three townships (Riverhead, Southampton, and Brookhaven) that make up the Riverhead Central School District. The current impact on the tax levy, projected at 5.97%, includes an estimated fund balance of \$3,440,000 for next year. Ms. Carney noted that the projected budget-to-budget increase of 1.96% is the lowest budget-to-budget increase we have had over a significant period of time (since 2006). If the proposed budget is not approved by the voters, the Board has the option of either presenting a revised budget for a second vote or adopting the state-mandated contingency budget. If a revised budget is defeated, the contingency budget would automatically go into effect.

A contingent budget would be 1.92% versus the 1.96% budget spending increase and would have a 5.89% impact on the tax levy. The preliminary budget would have to be reduced by about \$300,000-400,000 on non-contingent items (*i.e.*, equipment, school supplies, non-safety related building improvements, and charge for use of facilities). If a 2% property tax cap or the Consumer Price

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Index (CPI), whichever is less, goes into place, as is being proposed, it would not be a contingent budget but would be based on this year's budget and would prohibit districts from increasing the tax levy by more than 2% in any year.

Some questions and concerns raised are:

-Inquiry as to the status of Assemblyman Thiele and Senator LaValle's proposal to create district rates. (Ms. Carney stated that they are putting forth a change in equalization rates but does not think it will go anywhere.)

-Inquiry as to whether the district is getting paid anything in PILOT payments for two huge state parks – Wildwood State Park and Jamesport Park. (Mr. Singleton stated that they are not actually PILOTS but are tax levies. Property assessments are on the tax rolls...sent to the state...the state sends us a check. This is all part of the assessed valuation of the towns.)

-Is increase of \$1 million for students with special needs due to children enrolled? (Per Ms Carney: It's about the services that cost more.)

-How much of our budget is for the Riverhead Charter School? (Per Mr. Singleton: \$1,360,000 for this year...higher than anticipated for next year - \$1,560,000 or a 4% increase.)

-If our budget is defeated, the Riverhead Charter School still gets what they want without consequence. The State needs to be notified of this important issue during this crunch time for our public school children. We need to call Assemblyman Bishop and reiterate that the Riverhead Charter School has *carte blanche* while we have to make decisions that could diminish services for our students.

-Why are we not utilizing more substitutes in the Building and Grounds and Transportation Departments versus overtime which is a greater cost? (Mr. Singleton stated that overtime is done where we cannot get part-time help or in emergency situations.)

-Recommendation to consider cutting/reducing conferences next year for Board members.

-Will we make adjustments to administrative salaries as well as confidential/managerial employees? (Per Ms. Carney: Projecting 0% for administration, 0% for confidential/managerial...however, needs to be negotiated.)

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-Is there any reason for the addition of a Senior Clerk Typist in the Business Office with that level title? (Per Mr. Singleton: This is a transfer into the Business Office as back-up for the Payroll Supervisor.)

-Are the negotiated contracts with the auditors at 0% too? (Per Mr. Singleton: This will be the mantra for next year.)

-There is a big reduction in equipment/repair...is this because of less equipment? Less vehicles? (Per Mr. Singleton: We have a much newer fleet than three years ago. It is one of the areas where we cut and we'll see how we can live with it.)

-Will the district benefit from LIPA give back of monies? (Per Mr. Singleton: The district is doing a study on electric costs and may bring in an auditing firm to help.)

Ms. Debra Rodgers, Principal of the Phillips Avenue Elementary School, gave a Power Point presentation on the building that is host to 513 students. She expressed her appreciation to have the ability to sit with colleagues to make concessions and adjustments. Enrollment at Phillips is the largest it has been in five years. In terms of cuts and ways it will affect Phillips - there will be a loss of one Library Aide, one Teaching Assistant, and, all K-4 buildings will have one Security Guard. The goals at Phillips have been to:

*Phillips Avenue
Elementary School
Presentation*

- Improve student achievement
- Improve community relations
- Promote a positive school environment – *We are Safe...We are Respectful...We are Responsible*

In closing, she stated that Phillips has a staff that goes above and beyond for the students. The Power Point presentation is made part of the Supplemental File of the Minutes.

The following are comments heard from the community:

Community Comments

-How many students from our school district attend the Charter School? (Per Mr. Singleton: About 130.)

-\$1,560,000 is money that is following the student at the Charter School just as if those children were still in the district...the money would still be paid out.

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-Is there a way we could just pay the state for an audit? (Per Mr. Singleton: Does not believe that present legislation would allow that. The school district is required to have these audits every year.)

-On the issue of overtime – “brainstorm” and instead of 3-4 security guards getting paid overtime...use subs or utilize part-time guards. This, however, may not be doable with bus drivers.

A motion was made by Mr. Meyer, seconded by Mrs. Berezny, to adjourn the meeting.

Adjournment

Yes 6 No 0
Motion Carried.

The meeting adjourned at 8:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,


Barbara O'Kula
District Clerk